

**Proclamation 3708****NATIONAL MARITIME DAY, 1966**

March 22, 1966

**By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

Today the American Merchant Marine continues a long tradition of essential service to the American economy and defense. Throughout our history, American ships have contributed to the development of our modern economy, as well as to the strength and unity of the country. As this Nation's economy continues to expand, we will continue to need ships—fast, modern descendants of the famous "Clippers"—to carry our products to the far corners of the earth and return with the raw materials essential to our national prosperity.

Our merchant marine is also vital to our friends all over the world. The transportation of surplus commodities to many of the underdeveloped countries is an important part of our foreign aid program.

As long as the United States may be called upon to defend the Free World's interests anywhere on the globe, our ships are necessary to insure continuous supply of the military material that helps to prevent or defeat aggression by any country.

The complex task of creating and maintaining a merchant marine adequate to our needs for peacetime commerce, and sufficient for defense purposes, requires the efforts of government, management and labor and the support of all Americans.

To remind the American people of the important role of the American Merchant Marine in the life of this Nation, the Congress in 1933 designated May 22 of each year as National Maritime Day and requested the President to issue a proclamation annually in observance of that day. May 22, 1819, is the day the SS *Savannah*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic, set forth on its historic journey into the future.

Since May 22 falls on Sunday this year, it is appropriate that the day be observed on the following Monday.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, LYNDON B. JOHNSON, President of the United States of America, do hereby urge the people of the United States to honor our American Merchant Marine on Monday, May 23, 1966, by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes and other suitable places, and I request that all ships sailing under the American flag dress ship on that day in tribute to the American Merchant Marine.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this 22nd day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-six, and of [SEAL] the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and ninetieth.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

By the President:

DEAN RUSK,  
*Secretary of State.*